1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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241 Maguey (agave) Crab apples
Chayoté *Zapote blanco*

The above list is but a portion of the total number of varieties cultivated by the Tarascans in other villages. Plants used in Cherán but [438] grown in other villages include onion, garlic, tomato (several types), chile (many kinds), sugarcane, sweetpotato, banana, lime, lemon, orange, guava, mamey, mango, watermelon, canteloup, avocado, *zapote negro*, and cherimoya.

TYPES OF FARM LANDS

311 The lands cultivated by the Cherán Tarascans
134 all have soils almost exclusively composed of volcanic ash or cinders. However, low-lying areas which receive materials washed from the higher ground are usually more fertile and in a few specially favored spots may be cultivated annually. As a general rule, however, lands are cultivated only in alternate years.

311 Cherán lands are of five main categories: (1) "Plains" or valley floors, which may include some gently sloping or rolling areas but which are relatively flat; (2) patches of sloping land capable of permanent cultivation; (3) small areas of level land, usually called "*joyas*," consisting of small valleys, depressions in the midst of lava flows, which were not covered by lava, and the level depressions in the craters of cinder cones; (4) relatively level or gently sloping garden plots within the town; (5) temporary fields on the steeper slopes of the mountains.

[423] The so-called "plains" consist of several large areas (maps 2, 3), subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are
241 the principal crops grown. The "plains" are
311 cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the "plains" become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive years. Therefore, men who own land in only one "plain" plant only every other year. Consequently, everyone tries to have land in at least two "plains."

311 The largest "plain," usually referred to simply as *el plan*, is west of Cherán, extending from the foot of the slope below the town to the

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.596]

804 *Cubic measure (used in masonry)*
1 *barra* = 1 yd. × 1 yd. × 16 in.
1 *metro* = 1 m. × 1 m. × 50 cm.

PRODUCTION

433 439 Production in Cherán depends more directly upon the land than it does in most other Tarascan villages. Although the land ultimately is the source of all Tarascan raw materials, some industries require relatively few of such materials. In some cases—for example, the straw hat industry—all the raw materials are imported from outside the Tarascan area. Even more numerous are instances where the raw materials are secured from some other Tarascan town.

While Cherán economy is primarily self-sufficient in character, it is less so than are most Indian economies of Mexico. Cherán does supply most of its own basic food and housing needs, but it does not supply its own clothing. Moreover, many foods every Cherán resident desires are not produced locally. Numerous Cherán families also depend on wages more than upon their own direct exploitation of the land or upon industry. Finally, Cherán produces many goods for export, although to a far less degree than neighboring Paracho.

LAND

423 Tarascan land is of three main types: farm, forest, and residential. To these might be added public roads, water courses, and mineral deposits. The latter are relatively unimportant. Public roads and trails of course serve communications and do not enter directly into production. Water courses are also mainly in the public domain. Virtually their only use is to supply drinking water for man and beast and for washing purposes. Public lands also supply the small requirements of sand, clay, and building stone.

All permanent farm lands are privately owned. The only exceptions are occasional temporary fields cleared from the forest on lands too steep for cultivation for more than a few years. On the farm lands the major products are white or yellow maize and wheat. Beans, squash, fruits, oats, and barley are produced only in small quantities.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P.60a]

423 435 The value of farm land is startlingly low, although accurate figures on either the amount of farm land in the *municipio* or the amount owned by any individual were impossible to secure. The tax rolls of the town are an inadequate guide. A very large number of lands are not listed and in many cases the area given is much smaller than actual size. A number of farmers admitted this fact. The tax rolls show only 303 farmers, although most men in town own some land. The total parcels listed number 759 with a total area of 1,943½ hectares (a hectare is 2.47 acres) with a value of $259,620. Community-owned lands are listed as 1,667 hectares valued at $100,000. This would total slightly less than 9,000 acres, or about 14 square miles. This is probably less than half the total area of Cherán.

The average holding according to the tax rolls is 2.5 pieces of land, totaling 6.41 hectares valued at $856.86. This average is misleading, however, possibly through an error on the part of the tax collector's office staff, or perhaps because a few large landowners hold high-priced lands. From $80 to $100 per hectare is the most common valuation. An average of one page of the tax roll listing 58 farmers gave 2.62 plots per person, averaging 5.1 hectares valued at $377.07 or $74 a hectare. The largest holding on this page was 32 hectares, valued at $2,560; the smallest was one-half a hectare, valued at $50. Bearing in mind that these figures represent taxable values, actual values probably average around $150 a hectare.

Data from individuals probably are even more unreliable, yet show surprising uniformity. The average value is $77.08 per hectare. Estimates from six landowners are as follows:

Area (hectares)	Value
2	$140
4	350
16	1,280
½	40
14	1,080
8	640
44½	$3,530

The surprising closeness of owner evaluations to the average assessed values suggests that farmers are well aware of the latter. Information from more individuals is desirable but [156] is difficult to obtain. Even good friends nor-

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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[156] mally either refuse information or obviously
● 423 lie about the size and value of their holdings.
435 The only further evidence available on this point is an actual sale observed in which a price of $40 was paid for about one-half hectare of wheat land. This piece was already planted to wheat and would yield about 2 *cargas*. On the other hand, $400 was being asked for a hectare of the best maize land.

Residential lands almost always include a garden plot as well as a building site. Only in the center of town is this not true. Prices of residential land, however, vary sharply with location and, to a lesser extent, with the depth of the lot and the quality of soil. In the center of town shallow lots may be valued at as much as $25 a meter frontage, while on the outskirts the price may be as low as $10 a meter. The garden plot produces blue maize, vegetables, fruit, and sometimes wheat. Probably a number of persons who were said to own land in Cherán actually own only a large residential plot, but this point was not investigated.

Forest lands are owned by the community.
423 They serve as the source of firewood, lumber,
311 and other forest products such as shakes and charcoal, and provide grazing for livestock; as sources of game or wild vegetable products their value is negligible.

311 The use of forest lands formerly was open to
656 all who paid a small fee to aid the community to pay the Federal taxes on the land. Persons using the forest only for firewood paid less than did charcoal burners, lumbermen, or shakemakers. In recent years a permit from the Federal Department of Forestry has been required for any but household use, and efforts were being made to limit rights to members of a cooperative organization.

LABOR

462 The sex division of labor in Cherán bars women from most productive pursuits. Women's activities conform closely to the ideals laid down recently by a notorious central European —children, kitchen, and church. Women perform all the household duties, such as cooking, sweeping, and washing, care for the children, make most of the clothes, carry water (but not firewood unless they have no close male relatives), and take food to their men at work.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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471 is more costly than all the farmer's tools, especially the heavy type required to make hats. Even the sandal maker's lasts, hammers, and knives probably are more expensive than farm equipment.

CREDIT, LOANS, AND INTEREST

452 No organized credit facilities exist in the village, but money loans are sometimes made.
426 Storekeepers are perhaps the only group who consistently make use of credit and who also often make loans if they have capital. The major use of credit by storekeepers is to buy goods, especially cloth. Sometimes a down payment is made on cloth, the balance being paid when the cloth is sold. This facility seems to be extended primarily by wholesalers in
[437] Purépero. Most ordinary store transactions, whether buying or selling, are for cash.

One storekeeper also makes cash loans, mainly to butchers and *nixtamal* operators, who are apt to need considerable sums for a short time. The reported interest rate is 10 percent a month.

Other credit transactions are of two kinds. Most significant is the lending of money for which lands are given as security, known as the *empeño de terrenos*. In this type of transaction, the lender takes possession of the lands and utilizes them until the debt is repaid. The owner in the meantime must pay all taxes on the land. In other cases the lender does not take possession of the lands unless the debt is not repaid at the end of a term agreed upon. In either case, should the land have a standing crop at the time the lender takes possession, the crop is divided equally between the borrower and lender. There are some cases, although relatively few compared with the situation in many parts of Mexico, where lands have been held and cultivated by the lender for many years.[22] The owners have been unable to pay the debt but have continued year after year paying the taxes, in hopes ultimately of redeeming the land.

[423] [556] [22] In some parts of Mexico this is an extremely common form of exploitation. I have been told of regions where families have acquired control of large areas by encouraging small landowners to go into debt to them. The lenders have, in effect, established *haciendas*, but have been overlooked in the general agrarian reforms because the lands appear on the government records as belonging to numerous small owners. Often, ironically enough, the landowners are hired laborers working their own property in a futile effort to redeem their debts, but they never succeed in doing more than maintaining a large estate tax-free for the wealthy *hacendado*.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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178 435 494 Tables 8 and 9 give the prices of some goods and products. Although little evidence is yet visible at Cherán, at Chilchota in La Cañada, where the highway has been in use longer, it was said that the price of chickens had risen from 50 centavos to $1.50 with corresponding rises in other products.

TABLE 8.—*Prices of some important goods and products in Cherán*

435

Goods or products	Number or quantity	Price
Maize (shelled)	Liter	$0.04–$0.07
	Fanega	5.00– 7.00
Wheat	Medida	.55
	Carga	23.00–27.00
Beans	Liter	.15– .25
Squash	Each	.25– .50
Cabbage	do	.03– .08
Pears	Per 100	2.00– 3.00
Peaches	do	.40
Honey	Half liter	.30
Wax	Kilo	2.25– 2.50
Bread	2, small	.05
	1, large	.10
Raiz de Puja	Kilo	2.25– 2.50
Beef	do	.70
Pig (fattened for butchering)	1 (live)	40.00–75.00
Sheep	do	2.50– 5.00
Charcoal	Kilo	.02– .03
Planks	Dozen	6.00– 7.00
Railroad ties (Oak, pine, or fir)	Each	.60
Shakes (5 *cuartas* long)	Bundle (400)	5.00 and up
Handwoven wool cloth	Yard	1.00

[1] In Zamora or *tierra caliente*.

WEALTH AND PROPERTY

556 423 The major wealth of Cherán is forest and agricultural land. As has been indicated previously, all lands capable of permanent cultivation are privately owned, the remainder belonging to the community and being open to the use of all community members. One informant mentioned a possible exception to this statement, saying that the one large land holding of prerevolutionary Cherán has been taken by the Government and offered for sale to Cherán residents. The informant believed some lands in this holding were still unsold, but no further information was secured. In any case, the incident does not alter the fundamental pattern of Cherán land holding.

556 422 In terms of individual wealth, the basic Cherán concepts are those of rural Mexico. Wealth is primarily land and silver. Cattle loom less important, partly because they are not owned in large numbers, partly because the revolutionary period taught the people of Cherán that cattle are a less stable form of wealth. The man who owns sufficient land, however, has an essentially inalienable resource by which any losses of less stable types of

428 property, a form of ultimogeniture. Such cases are understood and usually cause no friction. Other instances sometimes give rise to bitter feelings. Cases were recorded where children had broken away from parental authority and had become established through their own efforts. Sometimes the elderly persons were cared for by a niece or nephew, or even by some person not related at all, who received all the property. Resentment is generally felt by the children, even though they may have well deserved such treatment.

If properties are small, the daughters are sometimes slighted. If a lot, for example, is too small to divide and there are a son and daughter, the son will get the lot. On the other hand, if the lot is large, it will be divided between them. Often, however, the brother will take advantage of his sister, who, to avoid a quarrel, will accept an unfair division but will lose no chance of getting even. An example that came to attention was a division of a lot in which the brother took the part containing most of the
[393] fruit trees. When the brother went on a 3-day trip during pear season, his sister and her husband cut all the pears and sold them. The brother hesitated to do anything about it because it would have brought out the unfairness of the original transaction.

Frequently, the division of personal and movable property is unfair. Children who are away from home are apt to get nothing. However, their land rights are usually more or less respected. Even so, on their return, they may appeal to the *municipio*, which will force the other heirs to make a proper settlement.

428 Various adjustments are made to meet special
423 situations. Often an expert in property values is called in to make the division. For example, a man with two children may have left a lot and a piece of farm land too small to divide. The expert decides the value of each and the one receiving the least valuable parcel is recompensed through sale of personal property. Where a lot cannot be divided, a piece of land may be sold from the estate to buy a lot for one of the children.

428 Conflicts also arise from transactions entered
425 into by the owner before death without informing the heirs. For example, Agustín Rangel's father bought a house from his own father.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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632 The general situation of the *municipio* has
634 already been discussed in the first section of this paper. That discussion and maps 1, 2, and 3 indicate the main features, and no further amplification seems necessary.

● 423 The *municipio* has fairly well defined boun-
632 daries, although there are usually disputes with neighboring communities. Thus Cherán currently has disputes with Cheranástico and Arantepacua. The boundaries are marked in various ways. In the cultivated areas the boundaries are marked with stone walls. Where water courses form the boundaries, no markers are placed, but in the woods, a strip 4 or 5 meters wide is cleared along the
[476] boundary. This is done by communal labor, and when the line needs clearing again an assembly is called and a day fixed for the work. Every male is supposed to go. The Municipal Representative (described later) is supposed to lead the party.

THE TOWN AND ITS SUBDIVISIONS

633 Cherán is a compact and essentially urban
[161] settlement with a population of about 5,000. Few North Americans, unfamiliar with the concentrated settlement forms of Mexican towns, would imagine it contained anything like this population. There are no suburbs and very little straggling out of houses from the main center. Around the outskirts the lots are a little bigger and the density of population is less but the transition from town to open fields is nevertheless abrupt.

361 The layout of the town is undistinguished. A central plaza with a fountain, *portales* or sidewalks covered with arches about it, the municipal building, school, priest's residence, and church may be duplicated in hundreds of Mexican towns. The plaza is not today the center of the settlement geographically. Undoubtedly the town has grown since the time of its founding, and because of the deep *barranca* to the north, expansion has been in the other directions, leaving the plaza north of the present center of town by two or three blocks.

363 Radiating from the plaza is a network of streets laid out in a rectangular grid which makes only minimal concessions to the irregularities of the terrain. The enclosed blocks or *manzanas* are utilized as administrative divi-

596 591 they have lived thus far. In the few cases where this is done, eventually several brothers and their wives may live in adjoining kitchens and the economic enterprises of the family will be carried on as a unit under the direction of the father. In such cases a joint purse will be kept by the parents or one of the older brothers. All important activities will be subject of discussion and consultation, particularly such matters as buying or selling land, building a new house, etc. In time, the direction of affairs will pass to the younger men, usually the older brother directing and giving final decisions. The extent to which the father will be consulted as he grows old will depend in part on his individual merits.

593 591 More commonly a joint family will not be established even though the son and his wife may remain living in the family residence. If the parents can afford it, they may give the son a lot or even a house and lot where he can live. Lacking parental aid, the son will do everything he can to acquire a new house and lot. Or his wife may own a house and lot which she has inherited and in which the couple will live.

593 423 885 Much the same situation will obtain regarding farm lands. A father may give his son some farm lands when he has shown he is able to manage his affairs properly. Or the son may work for others and save money to begin acquiring his own land. And in a considerable proportion of cases the wife will own lands which the husband will farm. In some cases, even though a joint family is not established, a son will take over management of the farm lands.

Lacking farm lands, the man will work for others as a laborer, become a trader going down to the hot country, work in the forest cutting ties, shakes, or lumber, or work at some trade if he knows one. In any case he may do some of these things on a part-time basis to supplement his income.

592 352 In addition to acquiring a house and lands, the couple needs to assemble the proper tools and furnishings. Although none of these are expensive, in the aggregate they require a bit of time, either to earn money to buy them or to make them. A census of the things found in a house, kitchen, and yard gives some idea of the amount of accumulation required.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

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La Cañada

443 Sunday. The places where meat is sold are
253 called "*despachos*" and are announced by hang-
262 ing out a red flag on a standard. Four or five places sell meat remaining from Sunday through most of the week. No distinction is made in price between meat with bone and meat without bone, but on request one will be served only meat; in the Tarascan towns the buyer has to take what is cut. Pork is preferred to beef. Beef hides are sold to dealers; those of swine either are made into cracklings or are pickled in vinegar after rubbing with chile, onion, garlic, and fragrant herbs.

226 Some fish are caught with nets in the river
262 passing Chilchota. The fishermen are only semiprofessional, fishing when they have time and selling the catch only if they have more than can be consumed at home. At least one
224 man, a farmer, hunts deer in his spare time.
262 He sells the flesh retail like beef. The dried
239 deer blood, hoofs, and hair are sold for magical or medicinal uses.

Black maize is used primarily to make
252 *chapatas*, tamales of black or red maize, sweet-
262 ened with brown sugar and mixed with black or red amaranth. It is also used to make *atole de cascara de cacao* (atole of chocolate hulls) and *ponteduros*, which are toasted immature corn ground and mixed with brown sugar sirup.

Greens (*quelites*) of wheat are made from
● 423 a wild plant or weed which grows among the
252 wheat and are greatly liked in Chilchota. A
262 curious custom exists in that anyone may help himself to these greens, entering into wheat fields belonging to others either with or without permission. Anyone objecting would be severely censored in Chilchota. Pozole is also made from green wheat toasted, ground, and mixed with chile, salt, and "*epazote*." The time for this is May at the harvest; it is "hot" food.

A food made from the chayote root is *sagú*.
252 The skin is removed from the tubers and the
262 pulp ground to a sort of flour. The flour is placed in water for 2 or 3 days, being stirred frequently. The flour is then allowed to settle, the water drained off, and the flour dried. Although it is used in various dishes, the main
[846] use is to feed small children and women recently delivered, when it is cooked in water, either plain or sweetened with honey. The plain boiled chayote root, uarás in Tarascan, is sold

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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Pátzcuaro

The Indian Village Communities of Mexico

128 The starting point of our discussion will be the Indian village communities formed after the Spanish conquest by a blend of Spanish and Indian institutions. These communities will be described in their general traits, common to all of central Mexico, in order to provide a picture of the national scene, and also because concrete illustrative material for the Tarascans is on some points unavailable at the present time.

175 Before the Spanish conquest, most of the Indians in the central valleys of Mexico, 621 including the Tarascans, were organized in communities, their members tied together both by kinship bonds and by owning land in common.[1] Such communities were called *calpulli* in Nahuatl and *calpul*, *barrio*, or *pueblo* in Spanish sources.

The larger political units were formed by a number of calpulli brought together under a common government by a ruling nobility.

175 The Indians of the calpulli, or commoners, were subordinate to the nobility.[2] The 565 nobles held the high positions in government, war and religion. The commoners had to pay tribute to them either in kind or in work. This labor was employed for public works or in tilling the land attached to offices held by the nobles.

[423] In central Mexico the nobles could own private land which was worked by a third [427] social class of tenants (Nahuatl, *mayeque*). There is no conclusive evidence that this type of landownership existed in Michoacan,[3] although it is highly probable.[4]

[563] After the conquest, the Spaniards replaced the Indian nobility as the dominant class in society. The commoners' tribute now went to the Spanish state or to individual conquistadores (encomenderos). The Spaniards also owned land privately in contrast to the communal ownership of Indian communities. They engaged in agriculture (mainly in cash crops such as sugar), cattle raising, and mining. They held all governmental positions and to

1. For the Tarascans, see Relación, 1869, 18, 21, 39, 52. For Michoacan, see Relación, 1869, 137.; Zurita, 1891, 166.
2. Zurita, 1891, 166.
3. Relación, 1861, 24.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 621 [565] fitted into the class system of colonial Mexico.

Every Indian community was also a cultural unit and had a large degree of cultural distinctiveness. These cultures, however, were also strongly influenced by national, economic, governmental and religious institutions. They are characterized as folk or local peasant cultures.

175 621 423 The other main type of social unit in rural Mexico was the privately owned estate, in Spanish, *hacienda*. Haciendas can be included in Sorokin's Type 5 of rural communities: "a latifundian, manorial, or large estate type of rural agregate (privately owned)."[6] The conflict between these two types of social units, pueblo and hacienda, is the essence of the history of rural Mexico. During this conflict the village communities receded in the face of the growing haciendas, while within the villages the trend was toward individualization of landownership and toward becoming Sorokin's Type 3, i. e. "a rural aggregate of individual farmer-owners."[7]

* * *

175 621 423 The colonial village community was the primary economic unit, to some extent self-sufficient but never completely so. In a society based on agriculture, it was the main landowning unit. Every village community had the following kinds of communal land: *fundo legal*, the site on which the town was built; *ejido*, land for the common use of all the villagers (mainly woods and pasture lands); *tierras de repartimiento*, land owned by the community but allotted for the personal use of the villagers; and finally *propios*, lands which were communally worked, or more frequently rented out. The produce of these was kept as a community fund (*caja de comunidad*) and used to defray municipal expenses.[8] Important among these expenses are those related to the organization of the cult and the support of the Church.[9]

175 [241] [463] Agriculture was the economic basis of most of these communities. Many household crafts were also of great importance. In some industries, products were consumed in the household; in others, they were traded over certain areas. There was much town specialization in those crafts which involved intense commerce.

[438] For various reasons differences in wealth came to exist within the community: The 175 556 Indian nobility kept some of their private

6. *Ibid.*, 863.
7. *Ibid.*, 863.
8. Mendieta y Núñez, 1934, 53-70; Haring, 1947, 174-8.
9. Chávez Orozco, 1934, passim; 1943, Chapter 3.

175 holdings.[10] Commerce also must have
[556] caused some inequality in wealth. Furthermore, it seems that the lands for distribution were not redistributed at certain intervals of time. Private property prevailed
175 within the community, although the prop-
423 erty title was vested in the community and outsiders were excluded from ownership. This internal organization of private property among community members allowed some concentration of land. From early times all these factors produced differences in wealth within the villages, but the communal ownership of land, always basic,
[621] maintained the solidarity of the villagers, as against outsiders.

175 The Indian communities were provided with an adaptation of the system of gov-
624 ernment in Spanish townships.

> "From one to four Indian *regidores* and one or two Indian *alcaldes*, depending on the size of the pueblo, were to be chosen each year in the presence of the priest and the local *corregidor* (later subdelegate), and relieved during their term of office of tribute and personal services. The alcaldes shared jurisdiction with the hereditary native chief or *cacique*, were aided by one or more Indian *alguaciles*, sometimes collected the local tribute, and had authority to make arrests and punish minor offenses such as drunkenness and failure to attend mass."[11]

175 The actual functioning of this system is documented for early times.[12]
624 With the Spanish conquest the higher
565 strata of Indian society and the related culture disappeared, but the Spaniards also granted to the Indian nobles, mainly to the town chiefs (caciques), privileges which allowed them to survive for a long time as a privileged group within the Indian communities.

This surviving Indian nobility first had the prerogative of filling higher offices in town government. Conflict on this point arose very early because of the impoverishment of the Indian nobles and the commoners' reluctance to obey them.[13] On the other hand we know that Indian nobles kept a great amount of wealth and power until the early nineteenth century.[14] The
175 scanty evidence as yet published suggests
623 that the system by which Indian nobles controlled higher offices gradually gave way to a system where the ex-officers

10. Zavala and Costelo, 1939-48, *passim*; Humboldt, 1: 429-30.
11. Haring, 1947, 174.
12. Chávez Orozco, 1943, ch. 1.
13. Zurita, 1891, 166-168; 169-189; 188-189.
14. Humboldt, 1811, 1:422-3.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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and the native elements incorporated into the local Catholic cult made up an important part of the local folk culture of each community.

• • •

That Michoacan followed the same general process as the rest of peasant Mexico is well attested in a number of sources. West's recent survey of the cultural geography of Michoacan includes colonial data on the economic aspects (population, agriculture, settlements, and handicrafts) which show that Michoacan developed along the same lines as the rest of Mexico.[19] These economic aspects will be considered further, for many still survive into modern times. The politico-religious organization of colonial times will be discussed later.

The Decline of the Village Community

Together with the patterning of Indian communities after Spanish townships, the Spaniards introduced into Mexico private ownership of land. They acquired large estates *(haciendas)* which were worked with Negro or Indian labor and whose produce was primarily destined for the national or world market. These two types of land tenure, — communal property of village communities and private property of haciendas, — have been in conflict throughout the history of Mexico. This conflict began early in colonial times; it reached its climax with the almost complete destruction of the village communities at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present.

With Mexican independence began the application of political and economic policies of liberalism, and greater decay of the village communities set in.

The Indians were no longer considered a special caste under a different system of law, but Mexican citizens with equal rights. Although Indian tribute was abolished, the Indians also lost the protections afforded by the *Leyes de Indias* to their autonomous government.[20] The most important blow to the Indian village community, though, was the loss of their economic foundation: communal ownership of land.

Three centuries after the Spanish conquest, the Church had become the largest landowner of the country. The fight for abolishing ownership of land held in mortmain by the church came to be the dominant fact in the nineteenth century history of Mexico.

19. West, 1948.
20. Chávez Orozco, 1943, ch. 4.

2:Carasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 423 668 [565] This fight turned out to be an attack on inalienable landed property in general, including the Indian communal lands. The purpose was to free those lands thus removed from commerce and throw them to the free play of the market, creating a class of small farmer-owners with a well developed idea of property which would make for social and economic progress.

175 669 423 The abolition of landownership by civil and ecclesiastical corporations was first written into law in 1856 and incorporated into the 1857 constitution during the period of Mexican history known as the *Reforma*.[21] The enforcement of these measures, in so far as they concerned the lands of Indian towns, was usually delayed until the end of the nineteenth century.[22]

175 423 648 [471] The Indians' communal lands were allotted as private property among the villagers. Once the property title was in individual hands, with the possibility of being sold to anybody, outsiders found the way open to acquire land which, through communal land title, had formerly been reserved for the villagers. The greater economic power of the non-Indians, and frequently unfair practices, allowed them to acquire a great amount of land from Indian villages. The concentration of land in haciendas and the impoverishment of the villages were thus facilitated. This process was accelerated during the Porfirio Díaz regime (1877-1911) because of the general economic progress of that period. The inflow of capital, building of railroads, development of mining and other industries, also led to a rise of land values and an increase of capital seeking to invest in land.[23]

* * *

175 423 668 648 In summary, after the reforms of the end of the nineteenth century, the haciendas grew enormously at the expense of the formerly communal land of the village communities or of land allotted to individual Indians who were not able to keep possession. On the other hand, the remaining village communities changed from units of peasant joint owners to rural aggregates of individual farmer-owners.

The growth of the haciendas at the expense of the land-holding villages and the change within the villages from communal to private property represented the general national trend of change in rural Mexico,

21. Phippe, 1925, 77.
22. Callcott, 1931, 196.
23. Phippe, 1925, Chs. 5, 6, 7; Molina Enriquez, 1909, 58-6.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This found its legal expression in the *Reforma* 423 and subsequent laws aimed at suppressing communal property. The change, however, 668 went at a different pace in different re- 648 gions. Mexico, due to the diversity of its territory and population, is characterized by a very unequal development of its various regions, thus allowing different types of society and culture to live together even if connected and coordinated into a single nation. The political and legal changes of the late nineteenth century represent only the turning point at which this general trend of change became the dominant political issue and required expression in the nation's legal system.

175 In marginal regions, however, the land- holding village, regardless of how many changes in its organization were required, 423 survived and held its own against the haciendas, in the same way as haciendas had been the dominant type of economy in parts of Mexico at the time when communal ownership of villages was recognized and protected by law. Consequently, in discussing the development of a particular region like Michoacan, further inquiry is essential to determine to what extent and in what manner this national trend of change has taken place.

* * *

Private estates had been introduced into Michoacan by the Spaniards since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They began in northern Michoacan where the land was particularly suited for stock raising, and in the tierra caliente where they concentrated on cattle and sugar cane. This is the area where the hacienda type of economy predominated until the Revolution.

Information is available on the political-religious organization of Indian towns at the end of the eighteenth century (from around 1789) and will be discussed later (Chapter 3). In the economic scene, the impact of the haciendas on the holding villages was at that time already noticeable. Some of the haciendas, like La Guaracha in the Zamora area and those on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, which after the Revolution were subject to land reforms and which are today on the edge of Tarascan-speaking territory, were already in existence.

175 The villages in the northern and southern areas had to supplement their native econ- 464 omy with work in neighboring haciendas. 177 This seems to have been the main factor leading to the decline and final disappear-

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 ance of native speech in those areas, a pro-
464 cess which began in the late eighteenth
177 century and was greatly accelerated after Independence.

In central Michoacan, the Sierra and the
175 Lake areas (except the southern shore),
438 the land-holding villages predominated and were devoted mainly to agriculture and handicrafts.[24]

175 During the Profirio Díaz period, the ap-
668 plication of the Reforma Laws abolishing
423 communal property, and the economic development of the country brought about further growth of the haciendas.

In Tzintzuntzan, the formerly communal lands were distributed among the villagers, and individual titles had been given by 1885. Between 1885 and 1902, a large part of the best agricultural land and most of the communal, non-agricultural lands were sold, legally or otherwise, to outsiders who, with these lands, established haciendas.[25]

[311] In the swamp of Zacapu, a company was formed at the end of the century in order to reclaim swamp land. Thus, several haciendas were established in a swamp, which had been the property of the neighboring Indian towns. At least one of these haciendas seems to have managed to acquire further land from the village of Tarejero.[26]

175 In many towns, however, the Indians re-
423 sisted the operation of the Reforma laws during most of the nineteenth century.

In 1902, the state legislature passed a law
648 regarding the distribution of the property
656 of extinct Indian communities (*Ley y reglamento sobre reparto de bienes de las extinguidas communidades indígenas*, 18 de junio y 4 de julio 1902). It provided that the formerly communal land of the Indians could not be sold or mortgaged; that in order to distribute the land every town should appoint two representatives; that in case the state government did not approve of the town's choice of representatives it should appoint attorneys (*apoderados*); that the towns should entrust their land titles to the authorities; and that if the towns did not appoint representatives after a certain period of time the government would name the attorneys. In most cases it was the government which appointed the attorneys.

This procedure apparently was intended to keep the lands from being sold to non-Indians, but although the land of the villages was not sold outright, it was leased

24. West, 1948, 11-18.
25. Foster, 1948, 171-2.
26. Simpson, 1937, 484-6.

175 for thirty or fifty years at very low rents,
423 so the Indians were actually left without
[648] land. This is reported to have happened in
[656] about fifty towns.[27]

The above information does not specify which towns lost their lands. The only concrete case cited is that involving the *jefe político* of Uruapan, a district which included several Indian villages. Unfortunately, no more information is available.

At the beginning of the Revolution, then, haciendas were found in the more level and warm areas north of the Sierra and Lake Pátzcuaro, on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, and also south of the present Tarascan region on the slopes toward the hot country. No hacienda has been studied nor is this the environment wherein the changes discussed in this paper take place. The present Tarascan-speaking area has not been dominated by haciendas, but is one of those where the towns of Indian peasants and artisans have survived longer, no matter what changes in land tenure occurred within the village.

[178] The main reason for the preservation of
[133] Indian communities seems to be that this
[132] area was less desirable for the hacienda type of exploitation. The mountainous character, forests, and cold climate did not make it suitable for the introduction of cattle or cash crops in large estates.[28]

The necessary background for our problem refers to the developments within the Indian villages in relation to the haciendas and to the individualization of land tenure as it took place from the late nineteenth century to the present time.

[621] The changes within the surviving Indian
[578] towns can be described from two points of view: (a) disrupting factors making for conflict within the village and breaking the solidarity of the villagers against outsiders; (b) the basic conservatism of the villages, i. e., the survival of fundamental economic conditions which tend to preserve the existence and internal solidarity of the villages.

The main disrupting factor is that of property differences within the village. As pointed out by Tannenbaum[29] for Mexico at large, the villages do not have sufficient land for the needs of all their inhabitants, and considerable differences as to property in land exist within the community, some people owning an adequate amount (according to local standards of living), some

27. Castillo, 1915, 144-5; also cited in Phipps, 1925, 119-120.
28. West, 1948, 17.
29. Tannenbaum, 1929, 88-90.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 423 others being landless. This condition seems to have been present even at the time when land was owned by the village, wherever private property existed within the community. When private ownership became general at the end of the nineteenth century, the differentiation as to wealth within the villages undoubtedly increased.

Although no detailed statistics are available for the Tarascan area, the existing information shows that inequality in landed property within the villages was prevalent, although in different degrees, in the various Tarascan villages. It has been reported for the Cañada villages,[20] Urapicho,[21] Cherán,[22] Tzintzuntzan,[23] Paracho, Charapan and Jarácuaro[24] either for pre-revolutionary or modern times.

The range in inequality is perhaps less in some small Cañada villages, which have preserved as communal holding the agricultural lands of the community.[25] In a large agricultural town like Cherán, where laborers come to work in harvest time from neighboring towns,[26] the differences are considerable. A great number of larger landowners rent part of their lands on a share crop basis to other villagers, and there are some completely landless men.[27]

[609] Many Tarascan villages discourage the selling of land to outsiders, the approval of the town being necessary for such transactions.[28] The increased inequality seems to have been greater in those places where selling to strangers took place. At the advent of the Revolution, this was the case in some Cañada villages where the largest landholders were mestizos from neighboring towns.[29]

[796] [426] The custom by which individuals take care of financing a given religious festival also led some villagers to sell or pawn and later lose their lands. Such was the case in Urapicho before the Revolution.[40] In La Cañada this was not only a factor in hastening the loss of lands but also the way by which outsiders got hold of them, for the Indians pawned their lands to moneylenders in mestizo towns.[41]

175 423 464 In all towns where there are landless people, the latter go out to work in neighboring towns or farms, for instance Nahua-

20. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 201; Sáenz, 1936, 225-6.
21. Beals, 1946, 121.
22. *Ibid.*, 12, 61-2, 68, 98-9.
23. Foster, 1948, 71-2, 173-5.
24. Field notes.
25. West, 1948, 32-3.
26. Beals, 1946, 81.
27. *Ibid.*, 89.
28. West, 1948, 32.
29. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 201; Sáenz, 1936, 225-6.
40. Beals, 1946, 121.
41. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 201; Sáenz, 1936, 256-6.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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tzen[42] and Jarácuaro. This was particularly the case in towns near haciendas to which they had lost their lands, as, for instance, in the villages on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro. Work in those haciendas was essential to the livelihood of the villages.[43]

These differences in wealth within the villages were responsible for the splitting of the villages into opposite parties in relation to the conflicts unleashed by the Revolution, which will be described below. No matter how violent this conflict became at times, it should always be kept in mind that these disrupting factors were never more than a tendency. The concentration of property was not large enough to lead to the formation of haciendas, and the village as a functioning economic unit was not destroyed. There are other factors, relating to land tenure and agricultural methods, to which can be ascribed the basic conservatism of the villages which still keeps the community together.

Practically every village has some communal lands left. Permanent agricultural lands are still communal in only five of the ten Cañada villages. There, title to the land is held by the town, but within the town private property prevails, and land can be inherited and sold among villagers.[44] Some other towns have, besides the individually owned lands, communal croplands which are worked in common, usually by the landless farmers, their produce going in part to the workers, in part to the town.[45] Forest land is communal everywhere, and all villagers have the right to gather wood or to farm temporary clearings. Only recently (in the 1930's), have the Federal Forest Laws required the payment of a tax and securing of a permit for those activities.[46]

Although cultivated lands are privately owned the agricultural technique demands the cooperation of the whole community. Beals thus describes this system in Cherán:

"The so-called 'plains' consist of several large areas, subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are the principal crops grown. The 'plains' are cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the 'plains' become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive

42. Beals, 1946, 61.
43. León, 1934, 155.
44. West, 1948, 23-33.
45. Loc. cit.
46. West, 1948, 23; Beals, 1946, 21, 59, 60; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 270; Foster, 1948, 170-1.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.18a] NU34 Tarasco NU34
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241 311 621 years. Therefore, men who own land in only one 'plain' plant only every other year. Consequently, everyone tries to have land in at least two 'plains'."[47]

Similarly in Jarácuaro, the whole island is divided into two sections which are alternately cultivated.

West describes this system as general in the Sierra.[48]

[609] Given this system of cultivation, the resistance against selling land to outsiders is easily understandable as all farmers have to work in close agreement. Any outsider using his land in a different way would disrupt the whole system.

182 621 438 433 This question of disintegrative versus conservative tendencies within the villages can also be discussed in relation to a subsistence economy or a market economy. No doubt, in proportion as production is for consumption within the village, the easier it is for the community to hold its own against disrupting influences; the more it is intended for a larger market, the more likely it is that outside influences will penetrate the life of the community.

439 433 The connection of any Tarascan village economy, whether agricultural or depending on crafts, to the national and world markets is undisputed and has been set forth clearly.[49] Part of the agricultural products, practically all handicrafts, and a sizable amount of labor are sold out by producers, while most consumption goods are bought from outside, with the exception of part of the food (housing and clothing to a much lesser extent). However, production of food, mainly corn for the villagers' own consumption, is basic to the economy of the villages and their relation to the national economy. This fact determines their attitude toward land and corn.

423 435 [185] Land is the most desired form of property and the safest way of investing money, because of the security it will give as a source of corn. The ability to produce one's own corn is the supreme aspiration of every farmer.

433 241 An analysis of agricultural economics shows that farming on poor land in Cherán (a prosperous farming town) and Tzintzuntzan is done at a loss; that is, production costs (equipment, taxes, labor, etc.) are greater than the value of the crop.[50] Owners of such lands could earn more by hiring out as laborers than by working their own fields.[51] This way of farming

47. Beals, 1946, 20.
48. West, 1948, 30.
49. Beals, 1946, 58-9; Foster, 1948, 148-8, 289-90.
50. Foster, 1948, 76-8, table 14; Beals, 1946, 63-6.
51. Foster, 1948, 78.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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178 and in some towns hat making has sur-
463 rendered to factory competition.[60]

Paracho, on the other hand, shows the
322 opposite picture. Here the manufacture of
178 wooden objects (bowls, vases, candlesticks,
[534] chocolate beaters, chessmen, toys, etc.) has
[439] greatly increased in importance. The town
[323] also manufactures guitars for Mexico City and Guadalajara buyers.[61] Santa Fe pottery has recently been selling to Mexico City and even United States curio shops.[62]

178 The declining crafts are among those
463 producing basic necessities, while the growing ones are luxury crafts depending in part on the tourist market.

Both the disappearance and growth of handicrafts disrupt the economic independence of the village, for they produce an increased dependence on the national market either in selling the developed manufactures or buying what formerly was produced locally. As in the land situation, however, the older order is preserved to a significant extent. Handicrafts for the local market are still the main economic activity of many villages: pottery, shawls, belts, agave fiber bags and sacks, hats, mats, baskets, metates, furniture still provide the livelihood of many Tarascans.[63]

No matter how important handicrafts
423 may be for the economy of a given village,
578 land tenure is the factor which has produced the conflicts during the revolutionary period. This holds true even for vil-
[438] lages predominantly devoted to handicrafts, like Tzintzuntzan (pottery) and Jarácuaro (hat making).

The conflicts which arose within the villages during the Revolution will presently be discussed.

The Mexican Revolution and the Tarascans

175 After the peaceful Porfirio Díaz period
668 (1877-1911), characterized by the economic development of the country, a period of
423 unrest began in 1910. Under the term 'Mexican Revolution' are usually understood both the armed conflict from approximately 1910 to 1920 and the various governments and their policies from the beginning of the struggle down to the present time. The Mexican Revolution is thus a very complex social transformation which includes all aspects of Mexican life. I shall discuss only those aspects of the agrarian revolution and reforms which concern Tarascan developments. The lit-

60. *Ibid.*, 66.
61. *Ibid.*, 67, 68.
62. *Ibid.*, 63.
63. *Ibid.*, 86-71.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.196] NU34 Tarasco NU34
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175 erature on this subject is adequate,[64] so no
668 extensive background presentation will be
necessary here.

●423 The agrarian revolution was an outcome of the concentration of land and the influence of capitalism on the countryside mentioned before in connection with the decay of village communities. It revolved around the fight against the haciendas.

The solution has been the breaking up of the haciendas and the granting of land to the landless under a new type of tenure known as *ejido*.[65] In ejido, lands are given to the community of *ejidatarios* (ejido members), who have the right to use the lands but not to alienate them, ultimate ownership resting in the nation. An agri-
[453] cultural Bank of Ejido Credit was set up in order to finance the exploitation of ejidos.

This change is the end result of many conflicting interests and opposing tendencies which have produced a very complex development. The more militant peasant groups (Villa and Zapata) were crushed by force of arms, and only afterwards were the land reforms of any sizable importance. These reforms, begun in 1915, were intended to restore to the villages the lands illegally acquired by haciendas. Soon the policy was accepted of appropriating haciendas as outright grants of land (ejido) to the landless. A number of laws were enacted, often changed and more often not applied. For a long period, red tape and other delays were the rule before any ejido was finally given. The workers resident in haciendas *(peones acasillados)* were excluded from distribution of land until 1934, the beginning of the Cárdenas administration (1934-1940), during which the land reforms were speeded up and really enforced.

423 The outcome today is that the hacienda has been replaced by two types of ejido: the individual ejido in which every ejidatario receives a lot which he works by himself; and collective ejidos which are worked cooperatively. Collective ejidos were attempted in the 'twenties and a case in Michoacan has been described,[66] but the individual ejido has been the rule. Only during Cárdenas' period were collective ejidos set up in those areas where a highly commercial, large-scale exploitation prevailed in the production of foodstuffs or of raw materials for industry.

64. Tannenbaum, 1929; Simpson, 1937; Whetten, 1948.
65. This ejido is to be distinguished from the commons of colonial villages, also called ejido.
66. Simpson, 1937, Chap. xxv.

● 423 The individual ejido is a turn back to small exploitation. No technological improvements have been made, no credit is received from the Ejido Bank, and in some cases corn for subsistence is now grown instead of a former commercial crop. Collective ejidos, on the contrary, are financed by the Ejido Bank and are under its ultimate control. This is a good example of the state intervention in production which characterizes the present development of world economy.

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175 As stated when discussing the decline of the Indian village community in Michoacan, at the time of the Mexican Revolution, a number of haciendas were near the Tarascan region. Some villages had lost most of their lands and included great numbers of landless people. However, this is not typical of Tarascan villages. Most of them were and are villages of farmer-owners and craftsmen. Although most Tarascans had not lost lands to haciendas, private ownership of land prevailed and there was within the village noticeable inequality in wealth. Relatively large, medium and small landowners, sharecroppers, and landless laborers were to be found. In some towns outsiders owned a considerable amount of land. Consequently, the agrarian aspects of the Mexican Revolution, i. e., the fight to get land from the haciendas, have been mainly external to most Tarascan villages, and the agrarian conflict caused by inequality within the village assumed here a peculiar form.

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[669] No good information is available as to the extent to which Tarascans participated in the armed conflicts, although some fought with agrarian revolutionists (Zapatistas and Villistas). The land tenure situation is reflected in the extent to which agrarian reforms have been carried out. Villages near haciendas have received ejidos, but the other villages have not, although agrarian conflicts also arose.

All the existing ejidos are of the individual type. In only one case (Tarajero) was collective exploitation attempted for some time. The people of Tarajero petitioned for land in 1915, and finally received it in 1924. It was good fertile land in a drained swamp, and, while part of former haciendas, the land had been used for commercial production. The agraristas decided to exploit it collectively. It seems, however, that the directing committee began to appropriate most of the profits derived from the exploitation, reducing the rest of the

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[661] ejidatarios to the level of underpaid laborers. ("The committee and its gang are living off the work of the rest of the people.") The upshot was that the ejidatarios managed to obtain from the government the abandonment of the cooperative exploitation and the distribution of the land into personal parcels. No further information is available.[67]

Ejidos were also granted on the southern shores of Lake Pátzcuaro. Here, ejidos were first established around 1920. Later on some were enlarged and new ones set up during the late 'thirties. Napízaro (originally granted 1936, enlarged 1938), Erongaricuaro (granted 1918, enlarged 1936), Uricho (granted 1920, actual possession given 1930, enlarged 1936), Santa Ana (1934), Tzurumútaro (granted 1921, possession given 1930, enlarged 1937), are among the main agrarista villages.[68] Other villages like Arócutin and Puácuaro have also agrarista groups but no information is available as to ejidos granted.

All these ejidos are individual. Lands are distributed to members by furrows, Tarascan style, and each individual lot is small (not more than 2 hectares). The tilling [241] of the land is done individually, although laborers are sometimes employed. The main crops are corn, wheat, and beans. [452] No credit has been received from the Bank of Ejido Credit. Woodlands are owned in common by the ejido. Its members can exploit them freely, but non-members have to pay a fee.[69]

In the Sierra and the Cañada towns there were no haciendas, and the granting of ejidos was not feasible. Only Tanaquillo in La Cañada had an ejido granted, in 1935.[70] In most villages, however, groups of peasants organized into agrarian committees in order to seize whatever lands [669] they could — communal lands or those belonging to the richer landowners. These revolutionary groups formed armed guards by means of which they seized and kept power in their villages.[71]

669 In some towns like those in La Cañada, Charapan and Urapicho, a great number of
175 farmers had lost their lands to richer neigh-
423 bors or to outsiders. Haciendas had not been formed, but there were much absentee landownership and concentration of property. The people fought to get their lands back.[72]

67. *Ibid.*, 477ff.
68. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 288-89.
69. *Ibid.*, 283-4.
70. *Ibid.*, 283.
71. *Ibid.*, 281; Sáenz, 1936, 23.
72. For Urapicho, Beals, 1946, 121.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 In La Cañada the local revolt took place in 1918, led by people from Tanaquillo. The
● 423 lands which had fallen into the hands of
669 mestizos from Chilchota, Purépero and Tangancícuaro were recovered and distributed among the revolutionists. Only in 1932 was this reform legalized by the State government.[73] In other cases, medium farmers were the rule, and there is not a very great difference in property holdings. Nevertheless, agrarista groups were also organized. Most Sierra towns had groups of this sort.[74] Cherán and Jarácuaro, the two villages for which we have most information, belong to this type.

In these small towns, which legally had no ejidos, the agrarians took lands illegally either from richer villagers or from the communal lands. In all these villages where the majority of the people was not benefited, there was really a privileged group formed. The agraristas made themselves the only beneficiaries of the lands seized, or distributed them without satisfying the needs of other equally needy villagers who had not taken part in their movement.[75] When seizing lands to distribute among
[661] themselves, they sometimes took land belonging to other villagers merely because they had been political enemies.[76] They also seized formerly communal lands for their exclusive use. Hence villagers not belonging to the agrarista group were obliged to pay a fee to the agrarian committee *(Comisario ejidal)* in order to have access to the lands.[77]

423 In Jarácuaro, for instance, the rush
660 grounds were formerly owned by the villagers, who used the proceeds from selling the rushes for buying candlewax for the temple; afterwards the agraristas exploited the grounds for their personal use. A similar case occurred during our stay on the island. A lowering of the lake's water level had left dry some flat land of considerable agricultural value. The agrarista group was trying to get the land from the federal government for distribution among its members, while the rest of the village wanted to distribute it among all the villagers (excepting the eight agraristas). At the time of our leaving (1945), the authorities were persuading the villagers to distribute the land among all people of both groups.

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73. Sáenz, 1936, 23-4; 96, 255-6; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291-3.
74. All but two, according to Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 289.
75. Sáenz, 1936, 256; also Tarejero, Simpson, 1937, 471-2.
76. Cañada, see Sáenz, 1936, 256; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 281, 291-2.
77. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 279, 281.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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423 661 A similar case was going on in Ihuatzio. Here an agrarista group was formed and was trying to obtain the new shore lands, which, according to traditional use, should be distributed among all the villagers.

The opposition of the Church to the Revolution and the fact that the financing of the cult had been one of the factors that led many peasants to lose their lands [798] brought about a strong anticlerical policy among the agraristas, who expelled the priest and forbade the cult, particularly the festivals. This connection of the agrarian movement with religion will be further discussed in the next chapter.

423 668 578 175 Thus, in a small farmer-owner environment a new privileged minority was formed, which seized the lands of political enemies or of the community, assumed control of the town administration, and attacked long cherished cultural values related to religion and the church. The agraristas kept power by armed force, being organized into a local militia. Except in towns where a great majority benefited from the changes, strong opposition was always evident. During the late 'twenties there were in the area some groups of *cristeros*.[78] Cristeros were anti-agrarian peasants in revolt against the government because of its anti-church policy. The main regions of the cristero movements were those where small farmers prevailed and consequently agrarismo was weak.[79]

The political conflict became so intensified that by 1939 the government had to send small detachments of federal troops to many towns.[80] The presence of these forces undermined the control of the agrarista militia. Shortly afterwards the agraristas were driven out of some towns, new authorities were established, and the cult was again allowed to function.

At the time of our field work (1945) this movement against the agraristas had become strongly influenced by the *sinarquistas*.

668 *Sinarquismo* is a political movement strongly Catholic and nationalistic, opposed to the government and with such traits as a semi-military organization, rallies, and a peculiar salute and flag. It won its initial strength in the late 'thirties in the Bajio region near the Tarascans and gained considerable mass support among the artisans and peasants. To the peasants it plays upon the failure of the government to improve their lot. While accusing the government

78. Foster, 1948, 175.
79. For instance, Arandas: Taylor, 1933, 20-23, 26-30.
80. Beals, 1946, 112; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 289, 292.

668 of stealing because it distributed the haciendas, it does not propagandize a return to the old order. It is supported by small farmers and even ejidatarios dissatisfied with the course of the land reforms. It promises the ejidatarios to rid them of the new bosses born of the Revolution and to give them as outright private property their ejido plots which now are ultimately owned by the State.

668 Since the late 'thirties, the period when
465 land reforms were more or less completed, the real wages in the countryside have been in decline[81] due mainly to wartime
[452] inflation. This fact together with the inability of the government to provide agricultural credit indicates the difficult situation of the countryside and explains the rapid growth of a protest movement like sinarquismo.[82]

668 The opposition to the agraristas and to the government which had arisen in many Tarascan towns has lately merged with sinarquismo. Sinarquista units function in many villages and many Tarascans are members of the party.

● 423 In the present situation, with the agra-
181 rian revolt receded, the Indian village communities, although greatly impaired, show a persistence of an economic foundation which is the basis for the survival of the

81. Whetten, 1948, 322.
82. Gill, 1944; Padilla, 1943; Whetten, 1948, 404-422.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.226] NU34 Tarasco NU34
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folk culture: some remaining communal property; small private land holdings to a great extent devoted to a subsistence economy; survival of old agricultural techniques and handicrafts.

In spite of this conservatism, however, the decline of the village community goes on. The concentration of land in haciendas, the main process by which the village communities tended to disappear, has been checked. But other disruptive tendencies operate within the village: small holdings are insufficient for the growing population; there is a surplus of labor which the national economy is unable to employ; the decay of handicrafts goes on due to industrial competition; the loss of the remaining communal lands of the villages continues although under different forms. The agrarista seizure of communal lands for their exclusive use implies the decay of the communal ownings of the village. The government's restrictions on the use of forests or the formation of cooperatives to exploit the woods further diminishes the communal holdings of the villages.

Thus, in the economic sphere a basic conservatism is coupled with the pressure of disruptive tendencies which continually make the situation of the village community difficult without, however, being able to break it completely. The same contradiction is to be found in the developments taking place in religion.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.26b] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

621 The particular form which the Indian communities took among the Tarascans
175 may have been influenced by Vasco de Quiroga, Bishop of Michoacan from 1538 to 1565, who seems to have followed in part the ideas of Thomas More's *Utopia*.[16] He
[743] tried to organize every Indian town around a so-called *hospital*. These were not only to take care of the sick but to organize the whole economic, social and religious life of the community. In Quiroga's ordinances, hospital is really the same thing as Indian community. Members of the hospital held
[423] all land in common. Every member was assigned a plot for his own use and also worked in the communal lands, the produce equally distributed among the commoners or devoted to the support of the needy (widows, orphans, the sick and incapacitated). Surplus produce was sold and the amount thus earned kept in a box under the care of three officers of the hospital who rendered an account every year. The heads of families democratically elected the officers of the hospital. Every hos-
[794] pital had as its patron the Virgin of the Conception, and a sodality *(cofradía)* with funds of its own attended to her cult. Many other religious activities were also organized by the hospital. Bishop Quiroga has
[438] also been credited with the introduction of new handicrafts in different towns, each specializing in a different activity.[17] The extent to which Bishop Quiroga succeeded in putting his ordinances into practice and the outcome of the hospitales deserve careful investigation.

Quiroga was not the only one to establish hospitales in Indian towns. Both Franciscan and Augustinian Friars founded a number of them, although Michoacan was the region of New Spain where they were of greater extent and importance. The first hospitales in Michoacan have been attributed to a Franciscan, Juan de San Miguel, and the primacy of Quiroga has been disputed.[18] The greater functions of the hospitales in organizing the whole life of the village seem to be peculiar to Quiroga's plans and this is the subject which requires more investigation. The basic traits of Quiroga's hospitales, however, are the same as those of other Indian villages in the rest of colonial Mexico: communal ownership of land; town specialization in trades; more or less democratic organization of the town government and cult; and

16. Zavala, 1937.
17. Zavala, 1937; León, 1906, 301-2, who quotes Moreno, a biographer of Quiroga.
18. Ricard, 1933, 188-194.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 289] NU34 Tarasco NU34
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175 794 575 624 Besides the cargueros of the hospital there were other religious officers. Sodalities other than those of the hospitales with funds for the cult were rare, and existed only in very few towns. But as a rule there were also other sponsors of festivals to saints not connected with the hospital. Common to all villages were several sponsors (*capitanes*, *fiesteros*, or other names) who organized the festival to the patron saint, and danced as Moors and Christians.

Other cargueros also sponsored the cult of different saints, every village having different devotions. Minor offices were those of sexton (*fiscal*, Spanish) and a *petájpi* (Tarascan) who was second to him. Also many villages gave personal service to the priest for the upkeep of his household, so that different villagers acted as doorkeeper, groom or errand boy, and some of the women cleaned house and cooked.

175 794 651 Financing the cult involved payment of alms, fees to the Church, and the upkeep of the priest and the cult (wax, ornaments, wafers and wine, etc.) and also the expenses involved in folk ceremonial elements such as the dancers' costumes, banqueting, and other entertainments like fireworks and bull fighting. Church fees were fixed by the Bishop and were called *arancel* (book of rates). They were primarily for mass and the administration of the sacraments. In Michoacan every village had an arancel of its own called *pindecuario* (local Spanish, from Tarascan *pindékua*, custom); besides those fees, the contributions for the support of the priest were mentioned. These were often in kind and were periodical, frequently coinciding with the main festivals. As long as the union of Church and State lasted, these aranceles had also the approval of the civil authorities.

Financing was obtained from three main sources: the communal property of the hospital (and other cofradías if any), whose produce was destined to finance religion; individual contributions and alms from all the villagers; and personal contributions from the cargueros.

175 743 423 575 794 In the eighteenth century, many of the hospitales had property devoted to the support of their activities. Most generally this was in the form of cattle pastured on the village commons. One of the cargueros or a cowboy was in charge of these cattle and received the milk as a personal reward. In other cases, land was also owned by the hospital and worked in common, or more often rented. In one case the hospital

owned a sugar press and a flour mill.[21] When the village's hospital had good property, this financed not only the cult and fiesta expenses but also other duties of the hospital officers, such as caring for the sick and paying for masses of the dead. In addition, the carguеros could use this same source of income to provide food for the villagers at some of the festivals.[22] One village had a cofradía in order to pay the *pindecuario* and another one to pay for the sick and for burials.[23] Some towns had more than one cofradía or *hermandad*[24] besides that of the Conception of the hospital.

In villages with rich property and in which other expenses were met by small contributions from all, cult upkeep was not a financial burden.[25] However, where the cofradías had no property or not enough to meet expenses, upkeep of the cult by heavy personal contributions placed a financial burden on the villagers. In Amatlan, Indian poverty was attributed to heavy services for the priest, in spite of the fact that there were two cofradías with their own property. In Tancítaro the hospital had lost property and the Indians paid from their personal resources, causing the decline of the hospital although it was once very prosperous.[26] In the region north of the Sierra where haciendas were already important and the Indian speech was beginning to recede,[27] the cofradías of the hospital owned no property *(fondos)* from which they could meet their expenses.[28]

The financial obligations of the cargos were specially onerous and sometimes led the carguero to peonage. In *Tangancícuaro*, the prioste became "almost a slave, hiring himself out as a muleteer servant [sirviente de recua]",[29] in Guarachita "very impoverished and sometimes almost like a slave in a hacienda".[30] In Jiquilpan, the mayordomos of different saints bound *(cautivan)* themselves for a long time in order to retrieve what they had spent.[31] On the other hand, in Tangamandapio and Taripo, a number of fiestas were no longer held because of the poverty of the people.[32]

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21. Tacámbaro (Osbourn Ms.).
22. Huetamo, Cutzeo (Osbourn Ms.).
23. Amatlan (Osbourn Ms.).
24. Apatzingán, Tacámbaro, La Guacana, Churumuco (Osbourn Ms.).
25. For instance Huetamo, Cutzeo (Osbourn Ms.).
26. Osbourn Ms.
27. Some towns in this area, like Sahuayo and Guarachita, were of Nahuatl speech but their culture seems to have been similar to that of neighboring Tarascan speaking villages.
28. Estado, 1864, passim.
29. Ibid., 476.
30. Ibid., 486.
31. Osbourn Ms.
32. Estado, 1864, 477, 478.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 296] NU34 Tarasco NU34
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624 794 More detailed information comes from Chilchota. Here a man was first mayordomo of the hospital, then mayordomo of the patron saint; later mayordomo of his barrio's saint, and then *vaquero* (another religious office) in order to become councilman *(regidor)*. Thereafter he was one of the elders.[37] Data from Pichátaro also seem to indicate religious office as prerequisite for eldership, but the facts are not clear.[38]

To judge from modern survivals, nomination of the new officers was made by the acting officers together with the elders. It was customary to ask for a cargo because of a religious vow or the desire to advance in the social scale. The elders could in addition ask any man to join in their duties.[39] Petitioning for office seems to have been accompanied by taking presents to the elders or councilmen, in typical Indian fashion.

Decline of the Traditional Organization: Anticlericalism and Catholic Reaction

175 794 735 At the end of the eighteenth century, then, the heavy cult expenses were causing the impoverishment of the Indians in those villages, which, through work in the haciendas, were more related to the national economy and which had no communal property, or not enough, devoted to the upkeep of the cult. In their turn the impoverished villages had to reduce the number of festivals because they were unable to meet expenses, and the authorities tried to suppress excessive expenses in some festivals and personal services to the priests.

175 794 423 For the nineteenth century there is no survey of the Tarascan area comparable to that for the end of the eighteenth. Only for the turn of the century is information again available. Since this is the period of further growth of the haciendas and loss of village communal property — factors which already were causing instability in the cult organization and the end of the colonial period — we can safely assume that the same trend continued during the nineteenth century. Looking into the modern situation we see that the communal property devoted to support of the cult is practically nonexistant. Only some cattle are still devoted to Saint Ines in Cherán. In Chilchota, keeping cattle for the Virgin is still remembered[40] and pro-

37. *Ibid.*, 218.
38. León, 1904, 427.
39. Beals, 1946, 132 (for Cherán); 218 (for Chilchota).
40. *Ibid.*, 218, 139.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.309] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

175
794 duce from the tule grounds in Jarácuaro
was used until a short time ago to buy wax
● 423 for the church.

Financing the cult is now effected almost exclusively by individual contributions
794 from cargueros or the townspeople at
large. Indian impoverishment caused by
735 attending to religious festivals is reported again by Lumholtz for Cherán at the turn of the century.[41] Since villagers were able, because of the individualization of landownership, to sell or pawn their lands to outsiders, the possibility of the cult expenses' hastening the loss of Indian properties undoubtedly increased. This is alive in the memory of many people today, for example in La Cañada, Urapicho, Uricho, and Arocutin.

624 The period of Mexican Independence up to the present time has produced a number of changes in the organization of local government. These changes cannot be followed in detail, for no study is available on local government in Mexico.

Today, the office of governor has disappeared without leaving any trace in modern organization. *Regidores* is today another name for the *municipes* (councilmen)[42] but no data are available as to whether they are a continuation from the colonial officers. Alcaldes were in existence at least until the end of the nineteenth century.[43] During the Porfirio Díaz period, government policy gave almost all direct control to the head (*jefe político*) of each district. After the Revolution a turn was taken toward the free township (*municipio libre*), and local governments secured more autonomy. Every municipio in Michoacan is now governed by elected councilmen, one of whom acts as municipal president and another as an executive (*síndico*). A judge and his alternate are also elected. There are in addition an appointed secretary, a treasurer, and policemen.

As each municipio includes a number of villages, the above officers are found only in the head town of each, although they may come from one of the dependent villages. Most villages being dependent (*tenencias*) have only a chief (*jefe*) with his alternate and a judge. Any survival from the old organization is not part of the official government but only of the folk organization of the cult.

The names of some of the religious of-

41. Lumholtz, 1902, 2:386.
42. Beals, 1946, 105; Foster, 1948, 178.
43. Constituciones, 1902, 404, 414-415; Lumholtz, 1902, 2:391.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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Pátzcuaro

CONCLUSIONS

794 religious expenses or by contributions from all the villagers as a group or from an individual sponsor.

771 Religious ideology in this period must have had a considerable number of ideas related to the unorganized religion, probably non-ethical and based on the personification of Nature. The Catholic ideology dominated, however. Ethical in character, it sanctioned such folk culture values as the family, small property, the Indian way of life and proper observance of the folk cult. But it also sanctioned national institutions: support of the priest and the Church and the national order which the Church in its turn supports.

621 These communities began to decline in the face of other growing segments of the
178 society (primarily the haciendas), and tendencies disrupting the folk culture became evident within the communities. Forces for change were active from early colonial times in advanced areas but at a much later date in backward areas such as parts of the Tarascan region. They became strongest with the capitalist development of Mexico at the end of the nineteenth century.

● 423 The loss of Indian lands to haciendas
182 diminished the importance of the Indian communities within the country. Within
178 the Indian communities the economic impact of this development caused the abolition of communal property and the more complete individualization of landownership, the decline of crafts, more work on outside farms, increased dependency on the market, and wealth differences among the villagers.

771 After the separation of Church and State, the old system of organizing the religious cult no longer had State sanction. With new systems of local government the religious officers became less connect-
[794] ed with the civil. Cult financing came to be done almost exclusively through personal contributions by sponsors, and, given the changing economic order, it constituted a
[735] burden which often led to impoverishment and the loss of land.

182 The factors disrupting the folk culture are evident in the folk ideology as it con-
178 demns money and wealth. With increased dependence on the outside world came

342 tiles. The other areas have abundant water, but the forests are distant. An exception is the Sierra town of Tarecuato, where, despite abundant forests and the relative scarcity of water, most of the houses are of adobe. In the Sierra it is also becoming increasingly difficult to secure materials for large houses. This fact, together with Mestizo [177] influence, probably is contributing to the spread of adobe, or stone-and-adobe construction.

OF CHERÁN The Town of Cherán

361 The church, parish residence, school, and the municipal building all front on a central plaza. Except for benches and a fountain, the plaza 363 is bare. Cement sidewalks and a surrounding paved area are contributions from the highway construction.

361 The width of the building lots varies from 10 or 12 feet (3 to 3.6 m.) to almost an entire block. 351 The depth in most cases is half that of the block, but in some cases it may be little more than 20 feet (6 m.). As a general rule, however, except in the center of town, the lot is large enough for a small garden, a few fruit trees, and at least a small area devoted to growing types of corn not ordinarily cultivated in the fields (fig. 2). The size of lots varies appreciably, though, in various sections of town. There is no general rule for placing the house upon the lot except in the center of town, where it usually abuts the street, especially if it is of adobe-and-masonry construction. If the house does not front on the street, a fence, generally of stone, is built along the street line. It usually is designed to keep out all animals including pigs, and customarily is above head height so passers-by may not peer over. The interior boundaries are also fenced, but the fences are often less substantial (pls. 2, lower; 3).

351 The lots are all owned individually. They may be bought or sold freely and may be subdivided in 423 various ways. A man with a large lot may sell a portion, creating two lots. Sometimes a man who may wish to enlarge his holdings will buy a strip from an adjoining lot or even the entire lot and merge the two pieces into a single lot. Heirs may also divide lots.

[p. 76]

3:Beals, Carrasco & McCorkle E-5 (1940-1942)1944
NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

BUILDING MATERIALS AND THEIR SOURCES

WOOD

313 656 [423] All wooden materials used in Cherán are produced from local timber. The forests stand almost entirely on public lands considered to belong to the town. Formerly, exploitation of any sort was open to all residents who had paid a small fee to an administrative committee. The fee was used to pay federal taxes on the land. Recently, the Department of Forestry of the Federal Government has restricted exploitation of the forests for any purpose other than the collection of firewood to persons having permits. In Cherán this [474] apparently will mean that persons wishing to cut lumber or shakes (or make charcoal) must join a local cooperative, for the Department of Forestry has refused to give permits to any other group or to individuals.

313 335 In general, the cutting of lumber is done by specialists. Men who have no land or inadequate land or, in some cases, men who prefer the activity, cut most of the timber and shape it into planks and beams. Shake making is even more specialized, and men who make shakes may do nothing else except look after whatever farm lands they may own. Only a very poor person would attempt to cut the planks and beams needed for a house if he were not a specialist, but anyone might cut poles and stringers used in the roof construction.

313 137 Woods used in house construction are pine and fir. Pine is most used and two types are distinguished, red (iaríni), the heartwood of large trees, and white, the sapwood of large trees or wood from young trees. From these woods are made shakes, *tejamanil*, "*vigas*" (any piece over 2 inches (5 cm.) in thickness), and planks, or *tablas*.[1]

313 412 Trees are felled and trimmed with the ax. To cut trees in sections, a two-handled saw is used called a "*sardina*." Splitting is done with oak wedges and an oak maul. Large pieces produced in this fashion are sometimes dressed down with ax or adze. Planks, or *tablas*, are sawed with a long two-handled saw (k'eréri arákutarakua). Logs destined for planks are squared with the ax, marked

[1] The measure of length is the *vara*, which is divided in fourths or thirds. Each fourth contains eight English inches (20 cm.); so the *vara* equals 32 inches, or 81.28 cm. Fourths and inches are measured usually with the hand and fingers, but the span is also used.

342 occasionally are of brick or cement but ordinarily are of wooden planks. There is also usually a kitchen of wood in addition to the masonry-adobe structure. The latter is more difficult to maintain in order and there is a reluctance to smoke up the interior.

● 423 Certain customs connected with the erection of masonry-adobe walls should be mentioned. 333 Often a division wall is erected between the forward part of two lots which may later be used as a house wall by either or both lot owners. If the cost of such a wall is shared, half the wall rests on the land of each owner. As frequently happens, however, one householder pays all the cost. In this case, the entire width of the wall is on the land of the person not contributing money. The latter, however, may use the wall as part of a house wall at any later time.

342 In the Lake Pátzcuaro and La Cañada regions, 333 house walls are almost always of adobe on a low 335 stone-masonry foundation. Usually the houses have a veranda or corridor. The walls are erected as described. Five heavy planks then serve as plates, "*planchas*," one on top of each wall and one supported by pillars at the outside of the veranda. Sometimes there are capitals, *zapatas*, between the pillars and the plate. The plates at the two sides extend from the wall to the pillars, or the side walls are extended to the edge of the corridor. In this case, no corner pillars are needed (pl. 7, lower, right).

Upon the plates on the two shortest walls is erected a triangular adobe structure, "*capisayo*" (kenzéjtakua). Across the other plates are laid joists, in the more elaborate structures extending well beyond the rear wall and edge of the corridor, and carved at the ends. If the joists do not extend beyond the wall and corridor, the plates on the short sides may go only from the outer edge of the corridor to a point part way to the opposite side of the house. In this case, the "*capisayo*" may be partially an upward extension of the house wall.

342 If the loft space is not used, shakes may be 335 laid on the joists to form a ceiling; often this is done only over the veranda. Alternatively, a plank floor may be laid.

Should the house lack eaves, two heavy planks, "*pisos*," are placed on the ends of the joists. Upon these rest the rafters. If the eaves pro-

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 32a]

342 177 within or near pine forests. By 1789 most of the buildings in Tarascan towns in the Lake and Sierra regions were roofed with shakes (map 18). Today in the towns bordering the Sierra the red Castilian tile has completely replaced *tejamanil* and is slowly penetrating into the Sierra towns.[43]

THE LAND SYSTEM AND THE PUEBLO

621 423 Tarascan settlements are fundamentally agricultural villages. They include not only dwellings arranged along streets and in house lots, but also the surrounding farm land. The land is the body of the pueblo, whose political and economic life revolves around land ownership and boundaries, crop planting and harvesting.

423 311 Few records exist on the ancient Tarascan land system; most lands, however, were probably held in common. Each community owned surrounding lands, the limits of which were determined by metes and bounds; the record and adjudication of pueblo boundaries were in the hands of the village chief, who apportioned agricultural plots to his subjects.[44] As in many modern Indian areas of Mexico, the aboriginal concept of village lands and their established boundaries is indurated in the present political and economic structure of the Tarascan pueblos.[45] Such holdings in the Sierra include various types of land: *monte*, or woodland pasture on steep mountain slopes and on lava flows; cropland in basin floors (*planes*, t'pákua), on lower mountain slopes (*laderas*, uanáten), and in craters of cinder cones (*joyas*, t'pákua-supíču). In La Cañada often the following lands are held by a given pueblo: irrigable alluvium on the valley floor, *temporal* lands and *monte* on the adjacent slopes, and *humedad* lands in the Sierra. In the Lake area types of land vary from pueblo to pueblo. Often small strips of irrigable vegetable plots are held along the lake shore; most towns hold *temporal* land on the lower slopes; those on

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[43] Although used in most Spanish towns (except mining centers) in New Spain since the late 16th century, tiles began to appear in the Lake Pátzcuaro district only in the late 18th century. In 1789 Pátzcuaro was the only town in the vicinity with tile roofs (approximately 50 percent of the houses were roofed with tile, the remainder, with shakes). In the same year one house in Naranja boasted of a tile roof. (AGN Historia, vol. 73, ff. 205, 218.)

[44] A copy of an aboriginal land title (1519) of Cherantzicurin is extant in AGN Tierras, vol. 967, expd. 5.

[45] In many respects the native land system in central Mexico paralleled that of 16th century Spain. Particularly was this true in regard to the concept of village holdings.

423 the western and southern shore often have fields
[311] in the Sierra.

Two systems of land ownership—communal and private—prevail in most of modern Tarasca. Since the land reforms of 1915, the *ejido*, a third type of holding, has displaced most of the haciendas around the margins of the Sierra.

Since Spanish contact most of the Tarascan agricultural land has become private property of family heads. Even in the few remaining pueblos which claim complete communal ownership of their lands, a strong individualization of property has developed. The historical process of the shift from communal to private ownership is not clear. Late 18th-century documents on land disputes among the Tarascan pueblos indicate that at that time the communal system prevailed at least in the Sierra. The issuance of individual land titles may not have occurred until after the reforms of 1857. In the Sierra private landholders (*propietarios*) often possess one or more plots in the *plan*, and still others on the less fertile *laderas*. Size of individual holdings varies greatly, since land is purchasable. Normal holdings average 2 to 3 hectares per family. Traces of the communal concept exist in the minds of the modern proprietors. Although legally possible, there is little desire to sell land to nonmembers of the community. If such a transaction should arise, it usually must be approved by the town council.[46] Consequently, pueblo lands are kept intact. Moreover, individual holdings, especially those in the *plan*, are rarely enclosed, for after harvest the fields are used as communal pasture.[47] Accordingly, the final date for removal of crops and the first date for planting in unenclosed lands of each pueblo is communally regulated.

Vestiges of the ancient land system are retained in the special communal holdings found in most modern Tarascan villages. Five pueblos in La Cañada—Tanaquillo, Acachuén, Ichán, Tacuro, and Carapan—retain communal ownership of all lands, at least in name. Family heads are allotted one plot of *temporal* near the pueblo and another of *humedad* in the Sierra to the south and east. The individual allotments vary from 2 to 4

[623] [46] The Tarascan town council is normally composed of the *representante del pueblo* and his committee of six. The *representante* deals with most internal affairs of the pueblo.

[351] [47] Fences and ditches are used most frequently to divide cultivated lands from pasture and to separate individual holdings on the *laderas*, or slope land.

423 hectares in size,[48] and may be used indefinitely by the recipient, provided they are not left untilled for more than two successive years. They may [428] be inherited by sons, daughters, or in-laws, and may be divided among them. A family head may sell the use rights of his land to another member of the community, but not to outsiders. The official title to lands is held by the pueblo.

Another remnant of communal holdings, common in all parts of Tarasca, is found in the woodland, which is considered common land.[49]

[804] [TEXT Continues TOP of P. 336]

[48] In most parts of Tarasca land is measured in terms of the quantity of grain used in planting. Thus, in La Cañada a plot of maize land may vary from 1 to 8 liters of maize in size. Approximately 2 liters of maize is necessary to plant 1 hectare. (The term "hectare," however, is unknown to most Tarascans.) Five liters of maize equal 1 *medida;* 100 liters of maize are equivalent to 1 *fanega* (one hundredweight), or one *yunta*, meaning the amount of land in which a team (*yunta*) of oxen can plant one *fanega* of maize in one season. In terms of wheat, 44 liters equal 1 *carga*, or from 1 to 1½ *yuntas*. The above equivalents are those used in Chilchota and Carapan. Similar land measurements are employed in the Sierra.

[49] This aboriginal custom parallels the ancient Spanish practice of reserving woodland as communal property.

TARASCAN ECONOMY

241 Tarascan economy is today, and was in pre-Conquest times, as diversified as that of any large Indian group in North America. Agriculture has always been the preeminent occupation of most of the Tarascan population. Formerly, a 226 significant part of the people were fishers (or farmers and fishers), living around the shores of Lakes Pátzcuaro and Zirahuén and the numerous lakes and marshes of the northern plateau; the modern fishers are limited chiefly to the islands 224 within Lake Pátzcuaro. Moreover, hunting and 222 gathering, although now of small importance, is still practiced throughout the area. Apart from 463 the food quest, two other occupations have characterized Tarascan economy since prehistoric days: handicrafts and trade. Many of the Tarascan [438] villages specialize in particular home industries, for which they are famed over a large area. Again, in prehistoric and modern times the Tarascan has been one of the more notable Indian traders, serving as commercial middleman between the *tierra fría* and *tierra caliente* to the south and west.

AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS AND ASSOCIATED CROP TYPES

241 Tarascan agriculture involves a mixture of New and Old World plants and cultivation practices. 177 The native trilogy—maize, beans, and squash—

[TEXT Continues bottom P. 336]

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 33-b]

423 311 [656] Before the promulgation of the Federal forest laws (1930's), all members of the pueblo reserved the right to cut wood and lumber in the *monte* with permission of the *representante*. Today a Federal tax must be paid (but is often evaded) by each pueblo for lumber rights. Small plots of land (*desmontes*) may be cleared and planted in any part of the forest, but the farmer must first gain permission of the *representante* and his committee. In addition to the *monte* many pueblos possess certain croplands, called *tierras de la comunidad*, which are not assigned permanently to individuals, but are worked communally, usually by landless farmers, who receive a portion of the harvest as remuneration. The remainder of the crop is often stored in the pueblo as communal property to be sold by the *representante* for the town treasury or to be used as food in time of shortage.

TARASCAN ECONOMY

241 177 still forms the leading crop complex, but the European grains—wheat, barley, the broadbean and lentil—have become intimately associated with Tarascan agriculture. European fruits are grown with native types; Old World vegetables, mainly cabbage, have become an integral part of native food habits. But the modern Tarascan considers such crops, most of which were introduced over 400 years ago, as part of his aboriginal culture. Furthermore, although Tarascans still practice pre-Columbian shifting agriculture on steep slopes, the Old World plow has transformed indigenous cultivation on level and gently sloping lands.

Agricultural acculturation continues constantly. Tarascan *braceros* returning from the United States have brought in apple cuttings from the Yakima Valley, grapevines from California, corn from Iowa. Within the last three decades a South American *Oxalis* (*papa de Castilla*) has been introduced in the Sierra south and west of Lake Pátzcuaro. Again, alfalfa cultivation is slowly penetrating into many parts of the Sierra. Recently the Federal Government introduced a few steel [654] plows in some Tarascan villages, and here and there one sees engine-powered threshing machines slowly replacing the ancient European threshing floor and flail.

313 ing is carried on outside the Sierra. Some beams and planks are cut by the people of Zipiajo and Teremendo, who have large tracts of forest on the slopes of El Zirate, and some farmers of the Lake area and La Cañada cut small amounts of lumber for home use.

313 Beals' discussion (1946, pp. 15–19) of legal
423 cutting rights, lumber products, and lumber tools for Cherán can be applied to most of the present Sierra pueblos; therefore, only a summary will be given here. As mentioned above, all Sierra pueblos possess varying amounts of forest
313 land held as common property. Since the late
[656] 1930's the Federal Government has attempted to control exploitation by placing all large forest areas under national domain, by encouraging the organization of local lumbering cooperatives, and by periodically inspecting lumbering activities.
[651] In most pueblos the Federal tax on lumber products is passed on to the individual woodsmen, who pay the town council a given amount for cutting rights. In other towns lumber cooperatives
[474] have been formed to pay the tax, each member contributing dues and having sole cutting rights in the village forest lands.

Although much lumber is for local use (house
[439] construction, fences, acqueducts, watering troughs, shakes, etc.), most is cut for the outside market. Raw logs, beams (*vigas*), planks (*vigetas, tablas*), and railroad ties of pine and fir are cut and pre-
[493] pared for lumber contractors, whose heavy trucks visit the larger villages during the dry season to
[492] haul the products to the nearest railhead. Woodcutters of the remote pueblos drag beams and planks to market with the aid of burros and mules.
[497] Los Reyes, Tingüindín, Tangamandapio, and Zamora handle the forest products from the western part of the Sierra, while Uruapan, Zacapu, Ajuno Station, and Pátzcuaro serve as lumber points for the eastern section. Formerly a significant forest industry, shake making (performed by skilled specialists) is slowly declining because of the increasing use of tile roofing.[128] Turpentine
314 is no longer distilled locally. (See Beals, 1946, p. 18, for illustration of Tarascan still.) Rather, the resin (*resina*) is gathered in 5-gallon tins and taken to the village, where they are periodically

[128] Although in some pueblos (Pamatácuaro and reuches, Angahuan, Capacuaro) shakes are still made for export to Uruapan, most are used locally. During colonial times and even in the last century large quantities of shakes were shipped from the Sierra to the northern mines, where they were the principal roofing material.

6: Friedrich E-5 (1955-1956) 1958

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Zacapu

A TARASCAN CACICAZGO
Structure and Function

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66 CACIQUISMO is a type of informal Hispano-American government operating to enforce the partially arbitrary control of an association of individuals under one leader, the cacique, a term derived through Spanish from the Arawak (Alegria, 1952). Caciquismo is a largely unstudied and partially covert feature of Mexican culture. It has long been dubbed a "national social problem."

A cacicazgo is a concrete case of caciquismo. Our primary reference is to the cacicazgo in a village, here called Durasno, which is part of Tarascan society, a group of some seventy thousand Indians living in the cool green mountains of northwestern Michoacan, Mexico. Salient traits of Durasno culture are: a population of fourteen hundred, bilingualism, plow and hoe agriculture, corn as a cash crop, adobe housing, a corn-beans-chili diet, a total absence of handicrafts, and a leading role in the radical, anti-clerical politics of the state. The ejido land, won in 1924, is administered by the community and worked in plots by families of socially equal peasants. The generalizations that follow are based on a detailed description and analysis of the culture for the following historical periods: first, the indigenous culture of 1885; second, a troubled time following the desiccation by Spanish capitalists of an adjacent, life-giving, marshy lake (1900-21), coupled with the rising control of a regional landlord-mestizo-clerical faction; third, a period covering the struggle for the rich, black soil of the ejido (1921-26), with the crystallization of an agrarian cacicazgo; fourth, a period of twenty-two years of sanguinary contention between changing factions (1926-48); finally, a period of increasingly centralized control under the present-day cacique and his oligarchy. The methods and concepts of ethnology, political science, and sociology were severally employed. The political culture of Durasno was set within the total context of village life and the larger structures of area, state, and nation (Friedrich, 1957).[1]

The principal structural units of Durasno culture have definite and often discrete political functions. The primary relations between men within the nuclear family enjoin active political loyalty that has practically never been broken. (The one known case in over fifty years in which brothers sided opposite factions is easily understandable on psychological grounds.) The father-son-brother block is the minimal and the most cohesive political unit of which larger structures are composed; intrigues must be conducted in terms of these blocks because every political act automatically involves all the primary relatives of both the nuclear families of the individual concerned (Levi-Strauss, 1945). The father in Durasno culture leads the nuclear political block. The inner core of a cacicazgo always includes the primary relatives of the cacique. The cacique leads this inner core and plays the role of an actual or would-be patriarch over the entire village. Older, charismatic caciques are called "tata," or "father," by the Tarascans. Thus the nuclear family has political functions in the village at large, and these functions are especially important in defining the cacicazgo.

A second structural block in Durasno politics is the ejidal family, a group of one or

612 423 66 more nuclear or bilaterally expanded families enjoying the usufruct of an ejidal plot, five acres of black soil. Such families are corporate, "nonunilineal" descent groups, with a locus of authority, which trace descent bilaterally from a common older relative who first acquired the plot (Goodenough, 1955). Almost all of the 218 ejidal plots are controlled by such families. They act as a block in politics and are represented by one head who votes at ejidal meetings.[2] The representatives of such ejidal families also dominate in the civil government since they include more than half the politically active nuclear families and, as a group, also possess the overwhelming mass of the community's wealth in private land. Occasionally a majority at an ejidal meeting will oppose the cacical authority.

592 66 The household, the third bilateral structure, includes one or more nuclear or bilaterally expanded families living in one or more adobe houses around one backyard. The majority of households contain ejidal families. The male members of a household, welded together by shared domestic and agricultural experiences, support each other during the ongoing political schisms and realignments; the members of a household operate as a block, which, unlike the nuclear family, can be divided by situational determinants.

612 66 The bilateral kindred also has a political function. Certain members of an individual's bilateral kindred, especially ambilateral uncles and nephews, and first cousins, are selected through the interaction of certain variables, such as ward residence. They function, among other things, as a politically supporting nucleus around every individual. The first agrarian cacique, for example, was principally supported by six first and second cousins, and the principal bastions of the present-day cacique are five (six till 1954) second- and third-degree nephews. In critical political situations this kindred stands firm.

621 612 66 A final type of bilateral structure divides the community into five large and several minor political "families," each with a core of ten to thirty men sharing a patronymic, plus a much larger associated group related to the core through blood and marriage, or simply affiliated through choice. Though the principles of alignment to these groups are numerous and flexible, all politically active men at any time belong to just one "family," and politics is conceived of by the villagers as struggles between such "families." They are the maximal political blocks within the village. A major event in Durazno political history was the exodus in 1935 of over thirty nuclear families belonging to one huge political "family." Informal political organization in the community is thus largely a special function of various bilateral kinship structures. These structures also partially define the structure of the cacicazgo itself. The cacique and his principal followers are each the focus of overlapping nuclear and ejidal families and bilateral kindreds, and they all belong to one of the large political "families."

608 66 Two other primary relations possess important political functions: ceremonial kinship and friendship. Ceremonial kinship is the compadre relationship between parents and godparents, formed on the occasion of baptism. The tie is stronger than that obtaining between first cousins and analogous to that of siblings. The compadre bond surrounds every adult male with four to seven trusted and loyal age mates with whom he has grown up and who are usually his social equals in this "horizontal system" (Mintz and Wolf, 1950). A political leader planning an assassination must reckon with the automatic if not immediate retaliation by some of his victim's compadres. Since good "fighters" tend to be related as compadres, a homicidal act against one of them may unleash a swift counterattack. In 1939 two gunmen who unsuccessfully ambushed a leader of the ruling faction were hunted down and shot to death within three hours by the friends and compadres of their victim. Individuals tend to vote and to ally themselves politically